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LEBANON AND THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

A REPORT

TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

JULY 1982

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

UNITED STATES SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, D.C., July 15, 1982.

Hon. CHARLES H. PERCY,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
United States Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: During the Memorial Day recess, I traveled to Lebanon, Israel and Jordan in order to make a first-hand assessment of the increasingly tense situation in the Middle East. It was my view then, as it is now, that events in Lebanon would be a key factor in the effort to achieve peace in the entire Middle East region.

In accordance with the rules of the Committee, I am submitting herewith a report on my findings and recommendations. I hope that it will be of help to the Committee in its continuing activities regarding the Middle East, an area that is vital to American interests.

Mr. Geryld B. Christianson, Minority Staff Director, accompanied me and was of invaluable help on the trip and in preparing this report.

With every good wish.

Ever sincerely,

CLAIBORNE PELL.

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INTRODUCTION

On June 6, Israel launched a massive invasion of southern Lebanon with the stated purpose of pushing forces of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) out of a 40-kilometer deep zone north of Israel. Clearing the PLO out of that area would ensure that the PLO would be unable to resume artillery and rocket attacks against the Galilee area of northern Israel.

Concerned with the situation in the Middle East, I traveled to Israel, Lebanon and Jordan during the Congressional Memorial Day recess in order to obtain a better understanding of the situation in Lebanon, the views of Israel and Jordan, and the prospects for peace in the area.

I visited Israel from May 29–31, Lebanon from May 31 to June 2 and Jordan from June 2–3. In each capital, I met with high government officials, U.S. Embassy officers, and knowledgeable non-government observers. While in Israel, I also had the great pleasure of unveiling a plaque in a forest dedicated to my father in honor of his work as the U.S. Representative on the U.N. War Crimes Commission where he became responsible for genocide being considered a crime against humanity or a war crime. In Lebanon, I had the opportunity to visit the ruins of Tyre in connection with my support for the work of the U.S. Committee for the Preservation of Tyre.

The day after my departure from Lebanon, an assassination attempt was made against the Israeli Ambassador in London. The following day Israel, apparently believing that the attack on the Israeli Ambassador was PLO-inspired (it actually turned out to have been carried out by an anti-PLO Palestinian group), bombed PLO positions in Beirut. The PLO, denying responsibility for the assassination attempt, retaliated with rocket and artillery attacks against northern Israel. That, in turn, led to the Israeli invasion.

Although there were no indications during my visits that an Israeli invasion would occur as early as June 6, the possibility of an Israeli military move was in the air everywhere I went. The views to which I was exposed are, therefore, still of some interest and relevance in the current, unfolding situation.

Background of the Lebanese Tragedy

Occupying roughly the core area of ancient Phoenicia, Lebanon has been a crossroads of East and West for centuries and a lively melting pot of peoples, religions and ideas. Since Phoenician times, Lebanon has rarely been free of foreign influence or domination, and that condition persists to this day. Yet the Lebanese people have

demonstrated a tenacious spirit of independence and love for their country that holds out hope for the future despite the severe difficulties of today.

In 1943, looking forward to the end of World War II and of French colonial rule, Christian and Muslim leaders in Lebanon agreed on a charter for independence that involved a compromise between the two religious communities: the Muslims would renounce their pursuit of amalgamation with Syria, and the Christians would give up their reliance on French protection. This sectarian agreement became codified in the constitution adopted after the war, which provided for a "temporary" sharing of power along religious lines. Thus, articles 95 of the Lebanese constitution states that "temporarily, and in deference to equity and accord, the various sects shall be equitably represented in public offices and the formation of cabinets, barring any detriments to the interests of the state."

Unfortunately, this "temporary" arrangement became permanent and failed to prevent a falling out of the two religious communities. Some observers, in fact, maintain that the sectarian construction of the government contributed to an aggravation of the religious tensions that led to a breakdown in national unity, first in 1958 and then again in 1975–76.

Overlying and complicating this internal struggle has been the presence of a large Palestinian Arab refugee community (as many as 500,000 according to some estimates). The Palestinian presence became particularly troublesome when the remnants of the PLO forces that had been crushed by Jordan's King Hussein in 1970–71 transferred their base of operations to Lebanon. The PLO became directly involved in the internal Lebanese situation, created virtually a state within a state in southern Lebanon, and launched terrorist attacks against northern Israel.

In 1975, the Lebanese pot boiled over into open armed conflict between the PLO and the Lebanese as well as between Lebanese Christian and Muslim militia forces. The sectarian divisions within the country split the Lebanese armed forces making it impossible for the central government to restore order. As a result, in 1976 Syrian military forces were introduced, at the request of the Lebanese Government, in an effort to restore order. Subsequently, the Arab League, of which Lebanon is a member, sanctioned the Syrian action and dispatched troops from other Arab nations to join the Syrians in a combined force known as the Arab Deterrent Force (ADF). The other Arab forces later withdrew leaving only Syria in the ADF.

The Lebanese initially welcomed the Syrians who managed to end major hostilities; however, the Syrians soon came to act like an occupation force and became an additional, very powerful and much resented element in the fractured Lebanese mosaic. In addition, areas of southern Lebanon remained under PLO domination because Syria, apparently fearful of Israeli retaliation, did not attempt to extend its control into the area close to Israel's northern border.

In 1978, Israeli armed forces entered southern Lebanon in order to clear the PLO out of the area up to the Litani River. In the face of

international pressure. Israeli forces withdrew after about two months and were replaced by U.N. forces (UNIFIL) except along the border where an Israeli supported Christian militia, headed by Saad Haddad, a former Lebanese army officer, exercised control.

After 1978, Lebanon was effectively partitioned into zones controlled by two different Christian militias, the Syrian ADF, the PLO and UNIFIL. These zones were somewhat porous, however, with some 40–50 separate militia forces operating throughout the country. As these foreign and domestic forces increased in strength, the central government was reduced to little more than figurehead status.

In the spring of 1981 a major confrontation occurred between Syrian and Phalangist Christian forces in the Bekaa valley east of Beirut. Israeli aircraft supported the Phalange and shot down two Syrian helicopters. In response, Syria introduced SAM–6 anti-aircraft batteries in the valley to protect its forces. In the summer of 1981, heavy clashes occurred between the PLO and Israeli forces across the Lebanon-Israel border. Philip Habib, a very able and distinguished retired U.S. career diplomat, was asked by President Reagan to attempt to negotiate a cease-fire between Israeli and PLO forces and the removal of the SAM–6 missiles. He succeeded in arranging a cease-fire, but the anti-aircraft missiles remained. Furthermore, Israel disputed the terms of the cease-fire. Israel maintained that Palestinian terrorist acts against Jews anywhere in the world as well as terrorist acts in Israel or Israeli occupied territory in the West Bank and Gaza—even if they did not originate from Lebanon—were violations of the cease-fire.

Although, according to the Reagan Administration's view, the PLO was respecting the cease-fire, Israel became deeply concerned by the increased threat that new equipment acquired by the PLO potentially posed for the inhabitants of northern Israel and by Syria's continued presence in Lebanon. A lively debate ensued in Israel as to whether Israel should seek a military solution to achieve its objectives.

This debate was still going on, with the advocates of a military solution in the ascendancy, when I arrived in Israel on May 29. This concerned me very much, because I was convinced that another initiative by Ambassador Habib, which was about to begin, held great promise of responding to Israel's concerns while avoiding more losses of innocent civilian lives in Lebanon. I was also concerned that the Israeli Government's consideration of military action in Lebanon occurred in the context of other Israeli actions that have constituted obstacles in carrying out the Camp David peace process—the formal annexation of the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, the expansion of the number and size of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, and the dismissal of many of the elected Palestinian West Bank mayors. In this regard, I was particularly worried that an Israeli cabinet decision to authorize military action in Lebanon might also involve a companion decision to take a harder line on issues relating to the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

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Discussions in Israel, Lebanon and Jordan

Israel.—Although I received no indications in my conversations with Israeli officials that an invasion of southern Lebanon was imminent, it was made clear to me that if a decision was made to pursue military action, it would be directed as much against Syria as against the PLO. The Lebanon problem, I was told, was twofold: the presence of Syria as well as PLO forces.

In the Israeli view, the Syrian occupation threatened the existence of Lebanon, especially the Christian community. Syria's aim was to dominate Lebanon; and since their arrival in 1976 Syrian forces have been constantly pushing back the Christian and Lebanese Government forces. The only effective resistance to this effort has been by the Christian forces, and only Israel would help them. In a very dramatic statement, one Israeli official told me that Syria wants to wipe out the Lebanese Christians; and Israel would not stand for such genocide or permit Syria to occupy the remainder of Lebanon. As an example of Syrian ruthlessness, I was given the example of what the Syrian Government had done to its own people in putting down a recent rebellion in Hama, near Damascus. Hama was surrounded and shelled by artillery reportedly leaving 7,000 killed and 20,000 children orphaned.

Regarding the second aspect of the Lebanon problem—the PLO presence in southern Lebanon—I was told that part of the 1981 cease-fire agreement was a standstill regarding military equipment in the south. The PLO was violating this aspect of the cease-fire by bringing in tanks, artillery and new Katyusha rockets capable of firing 40 rounds simultaneously instead of one at a time. The PLO had also been building harder-to-destroy fortifications in the mountains. The situation in southern Lebanon had thus changed drastically to such a point that the Israeli Air Force could no longer guarantee that it could neutralize the PLO; ground action would be needed to complement air action.

Despite this changed situation, Israel had assured the United States that it would respect the cease-fire as long as there were no attacks on Israel. I was told that 25 Israelis had been killed (without saying where or under what circumstances) during the 10 months of the cease-fire, and the Israeli Government was taking great political risks by its policy of restraint. Since the United States and Israel had different views concerning what would constitute a cease-fire violation, the Administration may not agree that these deaths were the result of cease-fire violations.

I asked what the United States should do in this situation, and the response was that Israel wanted the United States to take a stronger public stance in demanding that Syrian forces leave Lebanon and that the PLO get out of south Lebanon. Israel would also like U.S. support for a Western force in Lebanon that would provide better for Israeli security interests than UNIFIL has. I told my Israeli interlocutors that I understood and appreciated their concerns but that I hoped Israel would exercise restraint and not invade Lebanon again; in my view, any Israeli military action should not exceed what was proportional to the provocation on the part of Syrian and PLO forces. In

response, the senior Israeli official with whom I spoke said that there could be no proportionality in blood; Israel could not get involved in a war of attrition. Israel is not seeking revenge and was following a policy of doing the minimum necessary to deter aggressive acts against its people and territory.

I also voiced my objections to the Begin government's policy of building new settlements in the West Bank and expanding the size of existing ones. These actions, in my view, are serious impediments to the achievement of Palestinian Arab autonomy under the terms of the Camp David agreements and called into question Israel's willingness to trade peace for territory under Security Council resolution 242. In raising this issue, I was troubled by reports that 35 percent of the land area of the West Bank was being used or reserved by Israel for existing or planned military and civilian settlement purposes, that water was available to the Arab population only after all Israeli demand had been met, and that severe restrictions had been placed on new Arab construction.

The day before I met with Israeli officials, I visited the Israeli settlement of Gilo on the outskirts of Jerusalem. This settlement, with a current population of 15,000 and a capacity for 40,000 inhabitants was made up of very expensive fortress-like clusters of apartments. I doubt very much that they will ever be given up or dismantled. The land on which this settlement was built had been expropriated from an Arab family that had reportedly held the land for centuries. Despite the Israeli Government's action, the former owners refused to leave; so high fences were constructed by the government around each of the family's two houses leaving only a few meters of land around each house. I also visited another settlement on the West Bank that I had last seen in 1977. At that time the settlement had only about thirty single dwelling homes. Now it has hundreds of houses and apartments. What I saw at each of these settlements heightened my concern about the long-term implications of Israel's settlement policy.

I also learned, in a conversation with two Palestinian Arab leaders, of the concern and contempt with which Palestinian Arabs look upon the Israeli creation of Village Leagues as a means of undercutting the authority of the few remaining Arab mayors. The Israeli civil authority on the West Bank directs all Palestinian Arab requests and complaints to the Leagues rather than to elected mayors. Through this system of favoritism, the Israeli authorities apparently are attempting to increase the reliance of Palestinian Arabs on organizations that the Israeli Government considers to be safe and whose sole base of power is Israel's support.

One of the Palestinian Arab leaders with whom I spoke put his people's dilemma this way: "The problem is not bread, but freedom." The Palestinian Arabs, he said, have experienced many occupations—the crusaders, the Turks and the British—and they have survived; but the Israeli occupation is different, because it is aimed at driving the Palestinian Arabs out of their own land.

When I expressed my concern about Israel's West Bank policy, I was assured by an Israeli official that it was the government's policy not to expropriate private property or tilled land. He also disputed

the report I had mentioned about Israeli control over 35 percent of the land on the West Bank.

Lebanon.—While in Lebanon, I met with President Elias Sarkis, Prime Minister Shafiq al-Wazzan, Foreign Minister Fuad Butros, and Parliamentary Speaker Kamal al-Assad. I also met with other cabinet ministers and officials as well as a cross-section of knowledgeable non-government Lebanese. I will not relate the details of each of the conversations that I had in order to respect the confidentiality of the discussions. Instead, I will summarize the basic themes that were presented to me.

First, however, I would like to say a few words about the Lebanese people and the city of Beirut. This was my first trip to Lebanon, and I have never met more charming, warm and articulate people than those I met in Lebanon. I was deeply impressed by their love for and attachment to Lebanon. They were also amazingly hopeful about the future despite the 7 years of civil strife that had wracked their country.

Beirut was once a beautiful city, but everywhere the pock-marked buildings and barricades revealed the scars of conflict. Much of the city looked like Swiss cheese as a result of rocket fire. Now, of course, the city is in an even worse condition. Everywhere in and around Beirut one experiences the tangible signs of the divisions within the country and the armed rivalries that make daily living so dangerous. In order to travel from one part of Beirut to the other one could expect to have to pass through checkpoints manned, among others, by the Syrian army, the Christian phalange, the Palestine Liberation Army and, less frequently, the Lebanese army itself. Disputes among these groups erupted frequently and without warning, often catching innocent civilians in a deadly cross-fire. Yet people shopped, went to parties and tried to live a normal life.

In all of my discussions with Lebanese leaders, I was told of the key role that the United States could play in restoring the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. The United States was implored to pay more attention to Lebanon as Lebanon and not to view Lebanon simply in terms of the Israel-PLO-Syrian problem. At the same time, it was readily admitted that foreign forces have strong lines into Lebanon and when they have differences to settle, they settle them in Lebanon. Lebanon, I was told, has been a sick country for some time, but the Palestinian problem has caused a heart attack that must be treated as a matter of priority before it would be possible to treat the underlying Lebanese illness.

In this regard, virtually everyone with whom I spoke said that peace in Lebanon would not be achieved until the United States exerted influence on Israel to agree to the creation of a Palestinian state on the West Bank. The other theme that I heard most often was the need to bring the Soviet Union into the Middle East peace process; for unless they were they would always be stirring up trouble.

Many of the Lebanese with whom I spoke were sadly convinced that neither Israel, Syria nor the PLO wanted to see peace and unity restored in Lebanon. Fear was even expressed that Israel wanted to annex southern Lebanon.

Comments on the Lebanese domestic situation centered on the need for U.S. support for the presidency and for efforts to restore the unity of the Lebanese army. I encountered great concerns that if the presidential election scheduled for this summer does not take place, that would mean the end of all prospects for the restoration of a united Lebanon. One official told me that if Israel were to invade before the election, there would be no election and a partition of Lebanon would be the likely result.

While in Lebanon, I wanted very much to see the ancient city of Tyre because of my work with the U.S. committee seeking to preserve the ancient ruins. I also wanted to visit a nearby Palestinian refugee camp. I was delighted, therefore, when a trip to Tyre was arranged for June 1. The armored car in which Ryan Crocker, the political officer of our Embassy, and I were riding was in the middle of a column of a dozen cars, each containing assorted guards, soldiers and representatives of warring Lebanese factions. In some cases, men leaned outside of the car windows with machine guns ready to fire at the shortest possible notice. We stopped first at Sidon, where we had coffee and, on our return trip, were to have luncheon with Halim Fayyad, the Governor of Southern Lebanon. Then we went to Tyre, whose archeological remains are truly breath-taking in size and grandeur. We were particularly lucky in that Emir Maurice Chehab, who had led the major exploration and digging of the area, was our enthusiastic guide.

The ancient city of Tyre, once the capital of the Phoenicians, must have contained a couple of hundred thousand people. The arrangements for running water and the cisterns for holding water, the beautiful mosaics, the long straight avenues with shops and dwellings on each side, the small arena for games and, later under the Romans, gladiatorial contests, the huge hippodrome where horse racing occurred, all attested to the lifestyle of ancient Tyre. I would add that portions of the hippodrome had been used by the PLO for military storage and training purposes.

Only a portion of Tyre has yet been excavated which is probably a good thing, since the PLO used it as a base and harbor with the consequent result that the Israelis shelled it from time to time. This has damaged those ruins that have been excavated and because of the blast effect has also been somewhat harmful to those that are still covered, although those that are not excavated are better protected from the bombing. Although the full extent of the damage is not yet known, it is clear that the recent fighting around Tyre has taken a heavy toll in lives and property. I am pleased that Israel has sent a senior archeologist to Tyre to survey the situation.

Another peril facing these old ruins is that there is pilferage of those portions that have been uncovered although the Lebanese Government has sought to discourage such stealing. Nevertheless, the Byzantine mosaic floors are disappearing stone by stone.

It was my hope that Tyre could be considered an open city and out of bounds to both PLO and Israelis. Then archeological exploration could be started and, I believe, a city would emerge that would dwarf

any other archeological sites of the Mediterranean area. The challenge is there, and I hope it might be met by the American committee that is being set up for this purpose. I only hope that the recent military actions in Tyre have not destroyed too much of what so many were hoping to save.

From Tyre we moved to a refugee camp which contained Palestinian refugees, many of whom had been there since 1948. While the camp originally contained 20,000, its population had dwindled to 7,000. We went through the camp visiting dwellings, school classes and the infirmary. To my surprise, I detected little hostility to me as an American.

We went through several classes where children were being taught their lessons, English being their second language. When we entered a classroom, the children always rose to courteously greet us. In each school building, there was a bomb shelter where we were told the children frequently had to stay and, in fact, sometimes had their classes taught there. The effects of the frequent shelling were apparent. There was a clinic which had several doctors but seemed short on medical supplies. The houses, or really temporary row shacks, where the refugees lived were clean and well kept.

There appeared good organization and leadership throughout. The main problem was the obvious one of boredom and malaise. To counter this, there was an active recreation program designed particularly for the younger people, those who had finished school but still had no job or work. There was an actual recreational center with a large assortment of trophies and a busy staff.

While the refugees were well fed and clothed, there was a certain air of hopelessness about them. They invariably and vigorously expressed their anger and upset at not being in their homes in what is now Israel and the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

Jordan.—In Amman, I met with King Hussein and Queen Noor, Crown Prince Hassan and with several cabinet ministers and senior government officials. As in Lebanon, the Palestinian question was highlighted as a key issue in the peace process. I expressed the view that it might take a bold act such as Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in 1977 in order to break the current impasse but that I did not see much prospect for such an act on the part of either Israel or any Arab government.

I explained that I would be opposed to any Jordanian request to purchase fighter aircraft and anti-aircraft missile systems from the United States. The Jordanian position is that the United States should not view the question of arms sales to Jordan in a purely Arab-Israel context. Jordan's regional role in pursuit of objectives shared by the United States should be taken into account I was told.

I found the Jordanians very discouraged about the peace process. It was pointed out to me that Jordan supported Security Council Resolution 242 and the Rogers Plan. In the Jordanian view, Israel's fortress mentality and apparent unwillingness to trade occupied territory for peace are preventing progress toward a settlement; as a result, time is not on the side of moderates. In response to my thought that the Allon Plan demilitarizing the West Bank and leaving the Israelis in control

of the heights facing the Jordan River should be revived, I was told that although Jordan had problems with certain aspects of that proposal, it had a positive aspect in that Israel was at least prepared to entertain the idea of withdrawal from occupied territories.

I had a lengthy discussion on the question of U.S. aid to Jordan and was informed that the economic development problems Jordan faces are serious and will continue to become more serious because of rapid population growth exacerbated by the emigration of Palestinians from the West Bank. Jordan is, therefore, disappointed by the low level of U.S. aid.

I also raised the matter of educational exchanges, since I have long been interested in expanding this aspect of U.S. diplomacy as vital to our foreign policy interests. I was dismayed to learn that there are only eight Jordanians studying under government programs. In contrast there is a rapidly increasing number of scholarship programs for Jordanian students to study in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Israeli invasion that I had feared occurred just four days after I left Lebanon. I continue to believe that this action was premature in light of the efforts of Ambassador Habib to strengthen the cease-fire regime. But it is also clear that it would be difficult for any nation to restrain itself for very long when its people are under a constant threat of attack from the territory of a neighboring country. One must add, though, that the huge number of civilian casualties and the widespread destruction caused by the Israeli military action raise legitimate questions as to whether the draconian means justify the end.

For better or for worse, the scope of the Israeli military operation and the dramatic ease with which Israel has pursued its military objectives have broken the existing mold of events not only in Lebanon but in the entire Middle East region.

Many observers hold the view that the new situation in Lebanon presents a promising opportunity to restore the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon and to advance the Middle East peace process. I am a bit skeptical, but hopeful, that that will be possible. Certainly, a determined effort must be made to salvage something positive from the tragedy that has befallen Lebanon. In this regard, the actions I recommend are as follows:

Relief Aid

The first priority must be to mount an immediate and effective rehabilitation program for Lebanon. Although estimates of the number of casualties and homeless vary widely, there should be no dispute that the destruction and suffering are huge. As an initial step, the Administration requested Congressional authorization for $20 million in relief aid, but the Congress increased that amount to $50 million. It was an amendment of mine and of Senator Tsongas in the Foreign Relations Committee that led to Senate actio1 on the higher figure. Before long, however, the need will be much larger, and the United States should be prepared, along with other countries, to provide additional aid. To the extent possible, all aid should be channeled through the Lebanese Government as part of an effort to help that government regain its authority throughout the country. In addition, as much as possible of the American aid that is not given through Lebanon should be done through our private voluntary agencies such as Catholic Relief Services.

Restoration of Lebanese Unity

Our next priority objective should be for the United States to take advantage of the destruction of the PLO as a military force in Lebanon to do everything possible to restore a unified Lebanese Government and to prevent a partition of the country into Christian, Muslim and Syrian-controlled areas. I am deeply concerned that Lebanon has been viewed solely in terms of the Israel-PLO-Syrian problem with little attention paid to Lebanon as Lebanon. It is very much in the interest of the United States to see Lebanon restored as an independent, democratic, pluralistic and pro-Western nation. This would have to be a minimum achievement in order to justify any optimism about positive results flowing from the Israeli invasion.

As of this writing, Lebanon's President Sarkis, with the aid and support of Ambassador Habib, has formed a Council of National Salvation that includes the leaders of the major factions that have contested for power with the central government. This is a promising framework to restore unity, but the various Lebanese factions will have to be persuaded to put aside their differences and unite for the good of the country. In this regard, the various Lebanese militia forces should be urged, just as the PLO was, to turn over their arms to the Lebanese army; alternatively they should submit to the army's authority.

It is essential that President Sarkis succeed in his efforts to bring the rival Lebanese factions together. The culmination of his efforts ought to be the holding, without any outside interference, of the presidential election as scheduled (this summer or early fall) and the reconstitution of a unified army. Unless these objectives are achieved, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve an early withdrawal of Israeli and Syrian forces.

Israel is insisting that a 40 kilometer security zone be established in southern Lebanon to ensure that no hostile force is ever again capable of shelling northern Israel. Israel has proposed that this security zone be policed by a Western force including U.S. troops. In my view, the creation of a multilateral force of the size and effectiveness necessary to meet Israel's needs would be possible only if it is clear that the Lebanese army will eventually be able to assume responsibility for the security of the south. If that prospect is not in sight, then I foresee a long Israeli occupation or an Israeli beefing up of Christian militia forces to police the south. This latter alternative would clearly disrupt efforts to restore Lebanese unity and sovereignty; and either alternative is likely to serve as a pretext for a Syrian refusal to withdraw from Lebanon.

Regarding the proposal to include U.S. troops in a southern Lebanon force, my own view is that the United States should not assume that military and financial burden unless Israel declares a moratorium on establishing new West Bank settlements or expanding existing ones and declares its willingness to be more flexible on what it is prepared to accept in the Palestinian autonomy talks. Without such action on

Israel's part, the view would be strengthened in the Arab world that the United States supported the Israeli invasion. I will have more to say on the autonomy negotiations later in this report.

The removal of Syrian forces is also essential to the restoration of Lebanese unity and sovereignty. Since Syria entered Lebanon in 1976 with the support of the Lebanese Government in order to end the civil war, a show of Lebanese will and unity at this time would remove any basis for Syria to claim that its forces are still necessary to prevent a recurrence of the strife that required the introduction of Syrian troops 6 years ago. In this regard, the United States should use its influence with Saudi Arabia and other friendly Arab governments to withdraw the Arab League mandate that is the legal basis for Syria's presence in Lebanon. The removal of Syrian forces should not, however, be linked to the withdrawal of Israeli forces, although the removal of both forces is essential to the restoration of Lebanese unity and sovereignty. The removal of Syrian forces is desirable regardless of when Israeli forces are withdrawn; conversely since Syrian forces are beyond the security zone already cleared out by Israel, there should be no requirement beyond the creation of an effective force to police that zone that should determine the timing of an Israeli withdrawal.

The Palestinian Issue

One of the supposedly promising aspects of the Israeli action in Lebanon is that the Israeli success in removing the PLO military threat could serve as the basis for advancing the Camp David peace process through progress in the Palestinian autonomy negotiations. For the first time in its history, Israel faces no realistic threat on any of its borders. This situation presents a golden opportunity for Israel to demonstrate that, while it will not abide terrorism, it is committed to achieving an early and just settlement on the future status of the occupied territories. As an act of good faith in this regard, it would be immensely helpful if Israel would declare an immediate moratorium on the establishment of new settlements on the West Bank and on the expansion of existing ones. In addition, during the autonomy negotiations, Israel should be prepared to expand its autonomy proposal to include a role for the Palestinian Arabs in determining land and water use policy consistent with Israel's legitimate military requirements. It means very little to permit the Arabs to run their own education, justice and health services while the Government of Israel reserves to itself the right to squeeze the Arab population into an ever smaller land area and to give Israeli citizens first claim on the scarce water resources.

Unless this kind of flexibility is demonstrated, I fear that Israel will be vulnerable to charges that the successful operation in Lebanon is being used to intimidate the Palestinian Arabs in the occupied territories. What I fear most is that a continuation of Israel's hard line position on autonomy will lead to a resurgence of a PLO or other Palestinian military force in Lebanon. The departure of armed PLO forces from Lebanon will not mean the end of a Palestinian presence in that country. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians will remain

in Lebanon and, without a sign of hope on the part of Israel, that population could once again become a source of terrorism against Israel and a threat to the stability of Lebanon. This possibility bears directly on the question of whether U.S. forces should participate in a force to police southern Lebanon. Israel's hard-line policies regarding the occupied territories could serve to increase the security burden of a multilateral force in Lebanon, and that should be a factor in deciding whether the United States should participate. The possibility of a re-radicalized Palestinian population in Lebanon may also decrease the prospects of Lebanon's signing a peace treaty with Israel.

A failure of Israel to show greater flexibility regarding the occupied territories could lead many Palestinian Arabs to emigrate to Jordan where they could become a threat to the stability of King Hussein's government. The present Hashemite regime is moderate and pro-Western, and it would not serve either the United States or Israeli interests to see a radical group come to power in Jordan.

In addition, the effort that was underway at the time of this writing to relocate the PLO armed forces in Beirut to another Arab country also presents potentially grave problems. The presence of 6,000–7,000 Palestinian guerrilla fighters would pose a serious problem for any Arab government, just as the expulsion of the PLO from Jordon to Lebanon in 1970 contributed greatly to the disintegration of Lebanon. If the new Arab host to the PLO already has a Palestinian population, the problem could be aggravated by a continuation of Israel's present policy regarding the occupied territories. A bitter and despondent Palestinian community would be fertile ground for a transplanted and probably more radical PLO. If that fertile ground turns out to be in one or more of the oil-rich Persian Gulf states, United States interests could suffer greatly.

It may be possible to destroy the PLO as a fighting force, but the desire of the Palestinians for a national home cannot be destroyed; and there will be no peace in the Middle East until that fact is recognized and dealt with fairly. Yet I do not see a clear U.S. policy to deal with this problem. In fact, I left the Middle East with a sense that we have no Middle East policy at all, except a commitment to the Camp David Accords and a desire to do something (I am not sure what) to prevent the Soviets from increasing their influence in the area. There is, however, no set of specific objectives or a strategy to achieve them. To cite just one example, it became clear to me when I was in Lebanon that the Administration doesn't know what to do about Syria. Are they bad guys, good guys or something in between? The Administration apparently doesn't have a view. If there were a view one way or the other, we would either be turning the screws on Syria, or supporting them where we could, or trying to wean them from Soviet influence. Instead, there is only a cloudy silence and no program of action.

JORDAN

In Amman, I had the uneasy feeling that Jordan is desperately squeezed between Israel and unfriendly Arab countries, most notably

Syria. Jordan needs U.S. aid and support, but now is not the time to be sending new and sophisticated arms to that country. I can think of a no more damaging action on our part as part of a strategy (if there is one) to persuade Israel to withdraw from Lebanon and to be more flexible on West Bank issues than to send arms to Jordan.

One of the positive outcomes of the situation in Lebanon is a greater feeling of security on Israel's part. That feeling opens up the possibility of a more forthcoming attitude on Israel's part regarding the Palestinian problem. But an arms sale to Jordan would only add a new source of insecurity on Israel's part, and that could cause Israel to resist being more flexible in the autonomy negotiations. In addition, an arms sale to Jordan would almost certainly prompt Israel to request offsetting arms from the United States, thus ratcheting upward again the arms race in the cauldron that is the Middle East.

My own view is that the United States should increase economic aid to Jordan and be more generous in funding educational exchanges to bring more Jordanian students to the United States. We should also encourage Jordan to enter quietly into joint projects with Israel such as the Cooperative Marine Technology Program for the Middle East that Egypt and Israel have been engaged in for some time now.

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